ANDERSON 12/3/74

Masked Identity—A mysterious federal intelligence unit is buying thousands of dollars worth of masks and face molds from a California make-up firm.

The purchases so far include $1,500 worth of "custom sculptured" nose molds, $4,000 in "latex appliances" for four facial types and $4,200 in artificial face molds. The detailed masks include scars, bald heads and other lifelike details.

When the order was first placed, the firm was told the odd Halloween assortment was for the FBI. But a spokesman there earnestly insisted the bureau knew nothing about the purchases. At the postal boxes in Washington, D.C., to which masks and bills were delivered, a clerk let slip that "those are all CIA boxes."

The payments were made to the firm, however, by checks drawn on the U.S. Treasury from a Pentagon account, we were told.

Washington Whirl—President Ford will soon be able to tap his pipe in style. The Naval Research Lab is filling a presidential order for 80 ashtrays for Air Force One and its backup plane. Each cast-aluminum ashtray is about eight inches in diameter and costs the taxpayer $50 . . . A secret General Accounting Office Report indicates the major oil companies have incurred some $2 billion in what they say are extra costs during the energy crisis. The petroleum potentates, says the report, may attempt to get government permission to take the $2 billion out of the pockets of motorists, fuel oil users and other oil consumers . . .

We continue to get floods of mail from contributors to the Christian Children's Fund who are confused by two letters from the fund's argumentative director, Verent Mills. He insists our columns criticizing his management of the fund are "incorrect." Those readers in doubt about who is "correct" may want to request copies from Sen. Walter F. Mondale (D-Minn.) of his hearings in which the abashed Mills admitted his goofs and humbly promised reforms.

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